

QATOR ITRÏNS

“...it's my opinion that by now the well of former Talossans or near-Talossans will run dry...”

-- D N Vercáriâ

“I want to see this Republic self-sufficient as regards how we deal with one another.”

-- Miestrâ Schivâ

ELEZIUN AUGHT-FIVE!

ELEZIUN SPECIAL: The Seneschál Debate; Miestrâ Schivâ and D N Vercáriâ both speak their pieces • MAKING VOICES HEARD: M-P Furxhéir on Talossan electoral systems. • ALSO: A Brand-New Deet Cartoon!

Vote Popular Front

I seriously debated not issuing a May *Qator Itrîns*. I am, as I'm sure you've been reminded, a candidate in the (currently ongoing) Chamber of Deputies elections, and I was somewhat reluctant to put out an issue of the Republic's foremost magazine which could be accused of blatant electioneering.

However, on second thought I realised that there's nothing wrong with *blatant* electioneering. Only electioneering which pretends to be objective. The worst crime for any political activist is hypocrisy – and I am determined not to merit such an accusation.

So, in this editorial, I clearly and honestly solicit your votes – for myself, and for the party for which I stand. As do my esteemed Peculiarist opponents, in this same issue. The Guelphs seem much quieter, for some reason.

Anyway. You should vote PSD/Popular Front if you think that I've done enough to earn a shot at being Séneschal – and that Chris Gruber should continue in the role which has been (de facto) his for the last six months.

You should vote PSD/Popular Front if you consider the idea of myself and Chris Gruber working as a team one of the most amusing ironies in Talossan history. (In a good Social Democratic historical parallel, Lenin and Trotsky were also bitter enemies almost up to *their* revolution.)

You should vote PSD/Popular Front if you don't think our brand new constitution needs tinkering with just yet.

You should vote PSD/Popular Front if you want a government which includes the best and brightest of our citizens, not restricted to party loyalists.

You should vote PSD/Popular Front if you want more women involved in Talossan politics and government – and a Talossa with less of a bias towards first-language English speakers.

You should vote PSD/Popular Front if you support Talossan traditions, and find the idea of a Peculiarist government a bit too “interesting” a prospect.

You should vote PSD/Popular Front if you are in the Talossan mainstream, rather than on the far-right bank where our esteemed Guelph opponents stand.

And you should definitely vote PSD/Popular Front if you want a government which can publish its propaganda in our rich, glorious national language.



Miestrâ Schivâ
PSD/Popular Front candidate
for Seneschâl dal Repùblicâ

Votetz Frînt Populâr

Téu seriösmînt considerat non pùblicar ‘n *Qator Itrîns* da Mai. Eu sînt, come pèr certân voi tenetz remîndats, ‘n candidâts dîn la eleziun (corentmînt pasînd) pèr la Camerâ dels Deputâts, és eu fût squasi niac’hatnâ pùblicar ‘n ißûtâ dal xhurnâl praiminînd dal Repùblicâ, qî fost estarê fixhidadâ da campagñar haváirmînt pèr votatziuns.

Com’evri, recoxhitînd, téu realîzat qê non si tent cupâ campagñar haváirmînt pèr votatziuns. Solamînt campagñar praitençînd estarê objectiveu. La crimâ la pû piôr, c’è la simulaziun – és eu sînt rixatorxheu non deservar ‘n tâl acuçaziun.

Aglhôrc, dîn acest editoriâl, eu racoltéu liquideu és tgonestamînt voschtri votatziuns – pèr me, és pèr el partî pèr qêt eu sînt candidâts. Come façent va contréirs estimats Pecúliaristâns, dîn aceastâ ißûtâ mismâ. Els Guelpheux semblent muitamînt pû sotvosvîeux, pèr qualsevól razîun.

Zespitzi toct. Voi fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr schi voi pensetz qê téu facescû aîéi earnar la îportunitâ estarê Seneschâl – és qê Chirischtôvâl Cavéir fost continuar dîn la roslâ qî fût (da fâts) la tSia dîrânt las sex mesen dirnalaiset.

Voi fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr schi voi consideretz l’idéâ da mhe és Chirischtôvâl Cavéir, êrbhêtînd come ‘n esqipâ, viêns dal ironîas pû amusînd dîn la tgistôriâ Talossân. (Dîn ‘n paralél ben dal tgistôriâ social-democrâtic, Lenin és Trotsky fûvent ocsâ enemici aspreux prescâ txuscâ *sieu* revolucion.)

Voi fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr, schi voi non pensetz qê ár constituziun novâ non fost estarê cufabricadâ.

Voi fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr, schi voi vèletz ‘n governamáintsch qî includa els pû bens és els pû britxînds da ár citaxhiêns, non solamînt dels sostiréirs del partî governînd.

Voi fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr, schi voi vèletz qê pû dals frúlor zevienarhent pustavânds dîn els politici és governamáintsch Talossân – és ‘n Talossa cûn mîus da praixhúdiçâ contrâ acestilor qî non parlent Angleascâ come glhetg natâl.

Voi fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr schi voi sostenetz las tradiziuns Talossaés, és consideretz l’idéâ d’iens governamáintsch Pecúliaristâ ‘n pô trô «întzereçînd».

Voi fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr schi voi estetz dîn el ruicâl magñh da Talossa, propî qê sîr la costâ luégñh-drept, dove sînt ár contréirs estimats Guelpheux.

Ês voi sigûrmînt fossent votar PSD/Frînt Populâr schi voi vèletz ‘n governamáintsch qî pût publicar sieu propagandâ dîn ár glhetg naziunâl, ricieu és gloriös.

rebuttal!

dal contréir!

A New Vision for the Republic?

With the adoption of the constitution the Talossan Republic has reached a turning point in her history. The revolutionary phase after the split from the Kingdom is over now, the legal fundamentals for further legislation are written down and accepted by a near - 100 % - vote in a referendum. We're about to elect our first Chamber of Deputies, which hopefully will find answers to all questions that have been left open soon. And we'll elect the first President of the Republic within a few weeks - well, I'm telling you nothing new by saying this, even though I'm so amazed by what we have already achieved that I feel like enumerating all our achievements that deserve to be praised.

But now that we all know where we've been coming from, it might be more interesting to ask where we shall be going in a foreseeable future. Looking at our list of citizens and at the group of Friends of the Republic who are frequently seen at Wittenberg, I guess that we've reached all people who may have been wanting to join the Republic this way or the other, as a citizen or as a friend. There still may be a small group of former Talossans, "Kingdomites" or "near-Talossans" (Penguineans, Polyphonians) who may want to join the Republic sooner or later, but let's face it, this well is running dry.

Sooner or later we shall have to address the issue of attracting people who never heard about Talossa before, because immigration will become crucial for the well-being of our nationette. Let me tell you why. One part of the problem are Talossa's imbalanced population statistics, viz., the statistical preponderance of male citizens. We shall not overcome this by the average means of clueless politicians, i.e., by calling for a commission, or by appointing ministers. And the problem may be intertwined

with another big issue, the dominance of a political overhead over a cultural, scientific, gardening, traveling, beaux-arts and thus somehow down-to-ground Talossa.

For instance, we talked about a lot of projects such as a University of Talossa; there is a press that is always endangered by running short of contributions and coworkers, let alone that amable endeavours such as Radio Free Talossa are living on the ephemeral outbursts of creativity of their founders, always endangered by the inevitable necessities and calls of the "real life" beyond Talossa, our pretty hobby horse. At least the University of Talossa deserved to be institutionalised, thus the institution could support outstanding research such as the history project of J. Kelley and C. Cavéir. The TalossaPedia project should be maintained by someone whose job could be a "civilian" or universitarian equivalent to the job of the Secretary of State.

So what to do, if we don't have the manpower to put all of these projects on the right tracks? The answer might be: Immigration politics that will encourage proactive citizens to join Talossa. Advertisement that doesn't stress Talossa's addiction to politics. For example, a new homepage that does not talk about the old quarrels about the founder of Talossa anymore; we might wish to have a homepage that is talking about Talossan opportunities instead of this slightly worn-out complaint about the "gross misconduct" of the infamous King Robert de Rouergue. We might even offer some high "civilian" jobs to Friends of the Republic - for instance, what would be wrong with a Tric'hard F. or a Harold T. being appointed the Dean of the University of Talossa (with all due caution, of course - real universities may react paranoid when reading about fake academic titles)?



D.N. Vercáriâ, Seneschál candidate of the Movement for Republican Peculiarism (MRP)

Back to the issue of not finding enough women who would like to participate in the game of Talossa, cultural diversity might be a way to make Talossa more female-friendly. You may laugh at me now when I'm saying that I've found that the women that I know or knew aren't less interested in politics or rock music or cars or whatever than I - they're just seldom getting totally obsessed about these or similar topics at parties. Not in the way that men can waste away an entire evening and the whole following night, just feeling alright when repeating their old well-known arguments over and over again, as long as there is enough beer to keep the talk going. Or something...

Looking forward, the ship of the Republic should set sails now for the open seas, to sail away from the old quarrels with the Kingdom. What we need is a fresh breeze and new horizons. What we need is a lot of creativity, now that we have reached a turning point in our history. Being an old micronation that is looking back at 25 years of a sometimes exhilarating, always exciting history with loads of traditions will not be enough to keep us from going under.

What we need is immigration, what we need is some kind of a perpetual cultural revolution, lest we'll never get stuck in the concrete of our past.

Long live the Republic.

The Seneschál debate

*The following debate took place live on Saturday evening Talossan standard time, May 7 2005/xxviii between Popular Front candidate for Prime Minister **Miestrâ Schivâ** (MS) and her Peculiarist opponent **D. N. Vercáriâ** (DNV). **Chirischtvál Cavéir** (CCG) was the moderator. This transcript is edited only to correct obvious errors and to include interesting after-interview comments.*

CCG: I would like to officially thank each of you, our esteemed candidates for Parlamînt, for attending this debate.

MS: And thank you, esteemed Dean, for volunteering as moderator.

DNV: You're welcome.

CCG: Avec plaisir. Would you please introduce yourselves, full names and all, starting with the MRP candidate?

DNV: Dieter N. Vercaria. Hello!

CCG: Thank you. And Ms Schivâ?

MS: Miestrâ Schivâ, redactéir da *Qator Itrîns*. Buna ziuâ als toct i Talossâes.

CCG: I thank you both. For the first round, I'd like to do a simple Question and Answer period. There will be an opportunity for each of you to respond, but only at my prompting. Okay?

MS: Agreed.

DNV: Get on with it.

CCG: First question is for Mr Vercáriâ. What is your general vision for the Republic as a future member of Parlamînt?

DNV: I hope that we'll now enter a phase of our history, which is about looking forward to the future, instead of looking back at the times of a certain dictatorship.

CCG: Would you care to elaborate?

DNV: Well, the days of the Talossan Revolution are over, as well as the passing phase of provisionality.

CCG: Ms Schivâ, would you care to respond.

MS: The fact is that what makes the Talossan Republic unique is our history - twenty-six years of it. And twenty-five of those were spent, as my esteemed opponent put it, under "a certain dictatorship". I totally agree that we shouldn't continue to experience "phantom pain" from that unnecessary limb - the monarchy - which was hacked off our constitution. But we are shaped by our history - and that's what makes us Talossan.

DNV: As you may read in the next QI, it's my opinion that by now the well of former Talossans or near-Talossans will run dry, for instance, so it will become crucial to do something for more immigration

CCG: Mr Vercáriâ, please wait for

your prompt.

MS: I also point out that occasionally our "history" tries to reach out and grab us - note "a certain dictator" trying to stop us using Talossan intellectual property. It's absolutely true we shouldn't be focussing on this. But while we look resolutely forward, we must always have our rear-view mirror handy.

CCG: Our second question is for Ms Schivâ. What specifically sets your party apart from the competition?

MS: The first example is the language. My esteemed opponent is "agnostic" on el gheltg - in contrast, it's the thing that got me interested in Talossa first. The Popular Front is determined to encourage the use and expansion of our unique cultural inheritance, the Talossan language - no matter what "a certain dictator" might say. The second example is I oppose tinkering with our brand new constitution for at least the life of the first Chamber of Deputies. Let's give it a while to "bed down". The last major example I want to bring up is that the FP will make the incorporation of the Republic as a non-profit society a priority - so we can *all* own Talossan intellectual property. Oh, and we want a shiny new web-portal as well.

CCG: Mr Vercáriâ, your response?

DNV: To which question?

CCG: To Ms Schivâ's answer.

DNV: What kind of a question is this?

CCG: I ask her a question, she answers, and then you have an opportunity to respond.

DNV: And the question was? It kind of moved out of sight. ;-)

CCG: What is your response to her answer? Do you have one?

DNV: Well, the M.R.P. will not tinker with the brandnew constitution either, not in a hurry, but in the long run we'll bring in our well known proposals for amendments of the constitution. In the short run we shall try to find ways to attract more immigrants, for example by amended home pages that don't look back to the dethronization of R. de Rouergue - instead we think that our home pages should talk about "career opportunities" in the civilian sector of the

Republic, so to speak. For example, we may wish to offer the job of a Dean of the University of Talossa, a post which might also be assumed by a Friend of the Republic.

CCG: Next question is for you, Mr Vercáriâ. If you are elected to the Parlamînt, what will you and your party be doing from the first day? In other words, what is your immediate plan?

DNV: The most important issue might be the passing of an immigration act; of course in cooperation with all parties that will be in the parliament. Also, jobs in the High Court etc. should be brought out of the zone of provisionality.

CCG: Ms Schivâ. Your response?

MS: I look forward to co-operating with the MRP deputies on a new immigration act - including secret-ballot referendums on citizenship votes. I think there are other vital things that need to be dealt with first up, though. I think that legislation vesting responsibility for the content of our webspace - which my esteemed opponent rightly says needs updating - in the elected government of the Republic has to be a priority as well. The current webspace is outdated. And my opponent is right that we need a shiny webportal to attract new, non-ex-Kingdom citizens. But most importantly, it needs to be made clear that it belongs to the Republic, not to a private individual.

CCG: And our final question of the basic Q-and-A goes to Ms Schivâ. What is the best way to handle threats from outside the Republic?

MS: The only "threat" the Republic is ever likely to face is "a certain dictator" trying to prevent us using Talossan intellectual property. That should be dealt with by the elected government which can be held accountable to the people if the people don't like what it's doing. I know that several Republicans would rather such threats were ignored. And certainly the Republic will be an unpleasant place to live in, if such matters are what we talk about. But if real laws and real money are going to be brought in to stop us using our language - or even our name - ignorance becomes no longer an option. We must give in, or fight. And if we are to fight, much better that the elected government does so so that our

zebäts

public discourse is not tainted with such nasty, unpleasant matters.

CCG: Mr Vercáriâ, any response?

DNV: I agree that there are no real threats other than this one that is meant to steal our rightful Talossan identity. It's the M.R.P.'s stand that such threats shall be discussed in the open, because this is the way to avoid panics. We do not support secret security councils. I think that's one point that makes the M.R.P. different, in comparison with the PSD.

CCG: We now move on to the second round. Four questions again, except this time I will ask each of you the same question. However, you will not be allowed to respond to your opponent's answers. Understood?

MS: Versteht.

CCG: Herr Vercáriâ?

DNV: Entendu

CCG: Danke, bitte, etc.

Question One: What is your stance on the possibility of incorporating the Republic? Mr Vercáriâ first.

DNV: I'm for funding webspace and such, and this is consent amongst us peculiarists. Beyond this, I wonder how incorporating shall work in the big real world with it's multitude of nations etc. Something may be incorporated in America and not incorporated elsewhere at the same time. (never mind the typos)

CCG: Ms Schivâ? Your answer to the same question?

MS: As I mentioned above, I think it's vital. We need to be a legal entity so we can legally own our own webspace, intellectual property etc. We've seen what can happen when such things are "entrusted" to one person. It doesn't matter where, as long as *one* country's laws will recognize our property rights.

CCG: Second question: How would you define sovereignty for a nationette such as the Republic? Ms Schivâ first.

MS: Hmmm. Interesting question. I guess that "sovereignty" in the Talossan sense means that everything that happens in Talossa can get sorted out under Talossan culture and laws. In other words,



Christopher C. Gruber

we should act as much as possible as a self-governing, "autonomous" community, while, as I say above, being protected by macronational law from attacks by outsiders. The former dictatorship ended up splitting Talossa by trying to solve Talossan disputes by non-Talossan means. In that way, *he* violated precious Talossan sovereignty. I want to see this Republic self-sufficient as regards how we deal with one another. To use a sporting metaphor "what happens on the field stays on the field".

CCG: Same question, Mr Vercáriâ.

DNV: I would see our sovereignty as a state of mind. Peculiarism is the M.R.P.'s word for this. :-)

CCG: Third question. This one's about foreign policy. In what direction would you like the Republic to go with regards to foreign policy, and what do you intend to do to influence that vision in Parlamînt? Ms Schivâ first.

MS: Foreign policy for me boils down to the question of where new Talossans come from. Back in the Free Commonwealth of Penguinia, we immersed ourselves in the micronational "mainstream" - although not in their ridiculous mutual-masturbation "diplomacy". This meant that the very

best micronationalists looked at Penguinia and realised that we were a more vibrant, more fun and less obviously stupid community than their own. So they joined. Conversely, Penguinia shrivelled up and died when we moved out of that mainstream. Quite frankly, I think the best new Talossans will be those who've already got experience in other micronations and are looking for "the next step up". Abolishing the antiquated prohibitions on dual citizenship will help in this. So, the goal of foreign policy should be to gain a reputation in the micronational world as the best-run, most-fun micronation, and the least prone to pretend revolutions and petty-tyrant behaviour. To do this, we must open a dialogue with the very best other micronations. Septempontia leaps to mind - I'm sure there are others. Apart from the question of immigration, cultural exchanges can only enrich us. The former dictatorship was notorious for its isolationism. Isolationism, in the micronational sphere, leads to cult behaviour. No way should the Republic be enclosed by a Berlin Wall.

CCG: Mr Vercáriâ, your answer to the same question.

DNV: What she said. Open borders and a vibrant

debate

culture will hopefully help us to attract more citizens. Additionally, we should expand the non-political part of Talossa. More than 66% of the pop. sitting in the government and other branches of the state may possibly not attract people who are not into the very depths of politics.

CCG: Fourth question. What way will you and your party work with the office of the President on issues about which you are most concerned? Mr Vercáriâ first, please.

DNV: As you may know, presently we don't have a candidate for this office. Anyway, I think that the President her/himself should not be partisan. The President should be an uniting factor in Talossan politics, someone who's creative and inspiring the people.

CCG: Ms Schivâ, your turn.

MS: The President of the Republic has a clearly defined sphere of activity, as does the Seneschâl and ministers responsible to Parlamînt. I look forward to seeing how a French-style "two-headed" executive works in practice. The precise nature of the relationship, of course, depends on how much policy detail the parliamentary majority and the President have in common! In either case, if I am elected Seneschâl I will neither be subservient to the President's whims, nor try to marginalise him in the government process. Any joint-executive which I am a partner in will work as a team.

CCG: Thank you. Now we move onto the third round, in which you are allowed to ask each other two questions. Choose your questions wisely. And you will be prompted to ask them one at a time. First to ask will be Ms Schivâ. Your first question to Mr Vercáriâ?

MS: Esteemed opponent: if no party has a majority in the first Chamber of Deputies, will you be happy to co-operate with the FP on forming a government? If so, what priorities would your party have for a programme of joint government?

DNV: Even if the M.R.P.

continued on next page

would have a majority in the CoD, I'd wish to cooperate with the most active and most talented politicians to bring our nationette forward. Priorities: I suppose we already talked about this. Setting the Republic on the rails, smithing necessary laws such as an immigration law, doing something in the field of public relations, by refreshing our web pages, etc.

CCG: Ms Schivâ, you may ask one follow-up question to this answer if you wish.

MS: Mr Vercáriâ: how about cabinet posts in a joint government? What government jobs would the MRP most like?

DNV: We'll talk about this when it's time to talk about this. :-)

CCG: Okay, Mr Vercáriâ. You may ask your first question to Ms Schivâ.

DNV: Miestrâ, you certainly know that it's one of the main party planks of the M.R.P. that we want to take certain eligiblitly privileges out of the constitution. Would you support a step by step approach, first opening the Senate for all citizens to be eligible?

MS: I would say that that would be a nonsensical way to go about it since we don't *have* a Senäts at the moment!

CCG: Mr Vercáriâ, you may follow up this answer if you so choose.

DNV: Especially *because* we don't have a Senäts, we might get there sooner if all citizens of the provinces will be eligible.

MS: Look, if we are to amend the eligibility rules at all, it will have to be the actually existing office to which they apply at the moment - that is, the Presidency. I will not support a change to rules which are "in hibernation" anyway. That would be a meaningless gesture. And I will only support a change to the rules on the Presidency in the second Parlamint, after we've got a chance to see how the system works as a whole.

CCG: Ms Schivâ, you may ask your second question.

MS: Mr Vercáriâ, if the MRP gets the most seats and votes you will have the right to be Seneschâl of this Republic. Is this a responsibility that you really feel ready to take on?

DNV: Yes.

CCG: Ms Schivâ, any follow-up?

MS: The last Peculiarist Prime Minister of Talossa lasted seven weeks before getting bored and resigning. Think you can do better?

DNV: No doubt. :-) See, I've been an active Thingman in Penguinia for a while, and I've been Moderator and Secretary in Polyphony and I always got things done, he proudly says.

CCG: And Mr Vercáriâ, your sec-

ond question?

DNV: Since you talked about a government of national unity in your party flyers, what's your dream team, given you would become our first Seneschal?

MS: I don't want to announce the precise lineup of my team before I first know that I have the numbers in Parlamint to make it happen, and secondly before I've asked them to make sure they're keen. But I can let you know some things. Firstly, I think S:reu Anglatzarâ is a good Minister of Immigration and I'd like him to keep the job. Secondly, I want to take on the job of Minister of Culture myself, in order to push el ghethg dîn la Repûblicâ most effectively. Thirdly, we need a Minister of Women's Affairs, and I want a female



Talossan who's not me to take on this role. Fourthly, and most importantly, I want *some* of the best and brightest Talossans not in the Government - because, for the sake of democracy, we need a strong Parliamentary opposition. So some people will not get into the Government even though they deserve it - because we need a strong alternative government, because without that democracy means nothing.

CCG: Any follow-up, Mr Vercáriâ?

DNV: No, not really. I have some doubts that a Ministry of Women's affairs will help us to solve the issue of an overproportional male population, but an attempt will at least not make things worse than they are.

MS: Anything which involves more women in Talossan public discourse can only be a good thing.

CCG: Okay, then. That brings us to the final round. You are each allowed to make a final statement, with no fol-

low-ups.

DNV: Hopefully, at 1:45 CEST.

CCG: Please be sure to make your final appeal to the Republic straightforward, as we are still in the midst of the eleziun. Mr Vercáriâ, you go first.

DNV: I think most of the important issues have been addressed. I'm looking forward to the first legislation period of the CoD, what more can I say?

CCG: And Ms Schivâ? Your final statement?

MS: The Popular Front brings together a diverse range of Talossans behind a full, yet simple, programme for Government. We have a plan, and we believe it is sound. All the MRP candidates are also talented, and I look forward to working with them in the MRP. The real question for the voters is: who

do you want to lead the first government of the Republic? Myself, or my esteemed opponent D. N. Vercáriâ? Think about that for a while - but not longer than this Thursday. Sâ vivâdra la Repûblicâ! MS: (for second "MRP" read "CoD" above)

CCG: I thank you both for your time and effort. I believe the Republic is also grateful for your participation. Good luck to both of you, and good evening or morning as the case may be.

DNV: As for typos, don't edit this MRP typo, please... it's been too Freudian for this. :-)

MS: It's not my fault I type faster than I think!

CCG: I have the same problem, Dieter.

DNV: "my hands mistyped CoD, not my brain"

MS: yes. I no longer control the hands. The hands control ME!!!!

Choosing an electoral system

In a way, the electoral system of a country defines its political nature. Assemblies with a British legislative system tend to favour a two party system while proportional assemblies tend to produce a multitude of small parties.

There are exceptions of course. Canada for example, is currently plagued with the worst possible situation. The country is divided into 307 constituencies, 75 of which are in the province of Québec. All of the major 3 political parties (Liberal, Conservative and New Democrat) have a candidate in each of the constituencies, but one of the parties, the Bloc Québécois, only has candidates in the province of Québec.

In Québec, 54 of the 75 MPs are from the Bloc Québécois, with the remaining 21 being Liberals. It is expected that in the upcoming election will have the Bloc win an additional 6 seats from the liberal party.

Elsewhere in Canada, the three major parties fight for pro-eminence, with the Liberals (Center) always gain a few New Democratic (Left) voters who vote out of fear of the Conservatives (Right). In a proportional system, the New Democrats would most likely form a much bigger party, and get a fair share of the votes, and of the seats.

The situation is worse in Québec. A majority of the French speakers – who form roughly 80% of the population – vote for the Bloc Québécois, a left and pro-sovereignty party. The remainder of the population is mostly federalist and vote mainly against the Bloc. Under a perfect system, the Conservatives and the NDP would most likely win a small share of the Québec seats, but under our first past the post system, almost every anti-Bloc voter simply votes for the Liberals, fearing that a vote for the Conservatives or the NPD might divide the federalists and elect a “Bloquist”.

This means that there are 2 distortions in Québec : there is a distortion in the counting of the votes, in which the NPD and the Conservative have some of the votes, but no seats at all, and there is a distortion in the way voters vote. Many vote not for the Liberal party but rather against the Bloc.

The proportional system in use in Europe, and in Talossa at this moment, solves most of these problems. Multiple parties can be easily represented and voters intentions are well represented. The difference between the percentage of the votes and the percentage of the seats is



MARTI-PAIR FURXHÉIR looks at the options for electing a Talossan legislature.

slim.

In fact, in the Real Cosâ (RC20) system of the former Kingdom, the percentage of the vote for each party was the number of seats gained, divided by 5. EM200 screwed things up a little, but was still relatively close in percentages.

EM200 was, in my point of view, the single act that caused the inevitable break-up of the former Kingdom. In the past, under the RC20, a party with a lot of inactive voters needed “warm bodies” to fill its seats - otherwise, it couldn’t use them. A party with three active citizens and 15 voters for example, could very well win nine of the 20 RC20 seats (or 90 of the 200 EM200 seats) but would only be able to fill all of its seats under EM200, leaving the six extra seats of RC20 either empty or filled by non party members.

In that respect, RC20 encouraged big parties to be inclusive, to allow new citizens to take their place in the political process. It encouraged collaboration between parties, knowing well that a big party might need members of another party to fill some of its seats, like the PC did several times in the past.

But RC20 required 20 active citizens to vote on the Clark every month. With the TLP resigning from the Cosâ and the paranoid atmosphere not suitable

for immigration, it became less and less possible to achieve. The obvious solution should have been to temporarily reduce the size of the Cosâ to ten members, but instead, EM200 was approved.

This fact allowed Ben Madison to re-create the MN party, because he longer had to compromise with the PC party members to get Cosâ members. With only 3 party members, he could hold 90 of the 200 seats, and with only a fourth one, he could control the majority.

In the Republic, we decided to keep things real, rather than using the multiple seats per deputy system of EM200. We decided to do what should have been done and created a legislative house of a reasonable size : seven members. We also decided, early on, to have actual names of candidates on the ballot, in the form of the ranked list.

Since it is not easy to divide the votes between 7 seats, instead of using the direct percentage, the Sainte-Laguë, method of distribution was selected.

Both modifications from RC20 have huge advantages. First of all, the voters not only know for which party they are voting, but also for which citizens. The post-election seat negotiation days were over : a party is required to assign its seats according to its electoral list.

The second advantage is that the seat distribution process can be easily tweaked by playing with the dividers to favour fewer, bigger parties or to help more parties get their first seats. After discussion and several simulations, the 1.4, 3.5, 7.9, 11, 13 dividers were adopted, but can easily be modified in the future.

This solution appeared perfect to all of the citizens, until a problem appeared : What happens if a party gets more seats than it had candidates ? Four solutions were proposed :

- 1) Hold a partial election
- 2) Leave the seats empty
- 3) Only calculate the ratios for actual candidates
- 4) Allow a party to nominate the seat holders

An informal vote was held (it didn’t get Quorum) declaring option 2 to be the winner, but since option 4 was only added as a write-in, I suspect it might have been the most popular option.

I suspect that this particular problem will almost never occur, unless parties voluntarily provoke the situation by submitting almost no candidates, or if a major surprise occurs. The only other case that could occur, is if a party gets the sup-

port voters excluded from the house (President, SoS, judges and Senators).

Option 4 could easily fix that particular problem, without requiring a by-election and without requiring a partial house of deputies for a 6 months period.

But some of the M.R.P. members, instead of trying to improve the current system, are pushing for a different system, which Penguinia was using, the Single Transferable Vote (STV). STV is popular in many countries, because it allows, unlike the proportional system, all of the deputies to be locally elected, with a closer representation of the voter's wishes common to proportional or partially proportional systems.

But the STV is mainly useful with several constituencies each composed of several seats. In a country like the Republic, STV could really only be applied with a single constituency and it's complexity would require more work for the voter, as well as for the Secretary of State. In the former Kingdom for example, pre-TLP split, the STV could have been applied with each province receiving from 1 to 5 Cosâ members, depending on their size.

STV is one of the most complex system to administer, and in a place like British Columbia, Canada, who will soon have a referendum to adopt it, it can truly be beneficial.

I sincerely believe that STV, which is a definitive improvement over both the British system and the Proportional systems, wouldn't be superior to the proportional system currently in place. I am convinced that the only advantage STV has over our current system would be to produce locally elected deputies which is not, at this moment, required.

The proponents of STV in Talossa are even proposing to abandon the Party system and instead to have candidates individually campaign. Parties have been in the center of the Talossan history for a quarter of a century, and are, in my humble opinion, a necessity to encourage discussion, consensus and long term stability. After all, we are all Talossans only part time, and parties allow to ally the creativity of the various party members to that when one of the members is too busy, another can take up the baton.

Birth Notice

Qator Itrîns offers its heartiest congratuations to Tomás Gariçéir, the foremost proponent of the Talossan language, and his partner Maggie on the birth of their first child, Rory.

Noticiâ da Nataschâ

Qator Itrîns profra sieu gratüleschaziuns pü cjärtaloûrs à Tomás Gariçéir, el propoçadéir praiminînd del glhetg Talossán, és sieu uschôr Margretâ, sùr la nataschâ da sieu figlheu pirmalaiset, Rúari.

one bear's view...

by D. Nanöc'hfiglheu Vercáriâ



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